

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 204975  
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY ARA/CEN:WMATTHEWS:MMS  
APPROVED BY ARA:VPVAKY  
ARA/CEN:LPFEIFLE  
ARA:SASHELTON  
S/S-O :SRPVALERGA

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P R 141557Z AUG 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY  
INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204975

EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY VAKY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GT

SUBJECT: STATEMENTS OF GUATEMALAN VICE PRESIDENT DURING  
VISIT TO MEXICO

REFERENCE: MEXICO 12883, GUATEMALA 4664

1. YOU MAY BE ASSURED WE HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR  
CONDUCT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GOG. WE ARE ALSO SUR-  
PRISED THAT VILLAGRAN WOULD COMPLAIN ABOUT OUR RELATIONS  
AND HIS FEELING PERSONALLY SLIGHTED BY CERTAIN EMBASSY AND  
DEPARTMENT OFFICERS. OUR PERCEPTION HERE IS THAT HIS COM-  
PLAINTS ARE TOTALLY UNJUSTIFIED. WE HAVE CERTAINLY  
RECEIVED NO OTHER INDICATION OF POOR RELATIONS BETWEEN YOU  
OR THE EMBASSY AND THE LUCAS ADMINISTRATION. VILLAGRAN  
WAS GIVEN CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION, INCLUDING A SMALL 8TH  
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FLOOR LUNCHEON IN THE DEPARTMENT IN HIS HONOR, DURING TWO  
OF HIS THREE TRIPS TO WASHINGTON PRIOR TO HIS INAUGURATION.  
HE REFUSED SUCH ATTENTION ON THE THIRD TRIP BECAUSE OF ITS  
SHORTNESS AND THE PRESS OF OTHER BUSINESS. WE WERE AWARE  
HE FELT HE WAS NOT ADEQUATELY CONSULTED BY BOTH THE  
DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ELECTION, BUT  
HE DID NOT BRING THIS UP WITH ARA WHILE IN WASHINGTON, AND

WE ASSUMED HE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPROPRIETY OF ANY EMBASSY OR WASHINGTON-INITIATED CONTACT AFTER THE DISPUTED ELECTION AND PRIOR TO CERTIFICATION OF THE RESULTS. BOTH ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHELTON WERE OUT OF THE COUNTRY WHEN HE MADE THE TRIP DURING WHICH HE CONSULTED MOST EXTENSIVELY WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS, BUT BOTH TODMAN AND SHELTON CONFERRED WITH HIM DURING THEIR TRIPS TO GUATEMALA.

2. SHELTON EXPLORED THIS MATTER DELICATELY WITH GUATEMALAN OAS DEPUTY SEC GEN ZELAYA (A CLOSE FRIEND OF VILLAGRAN) ON AUGUST 11 AND WILL DO SO WITH AMBASSADOR LAMPORT ON AUGUST 17. ZELAYA TOLD SHELTON HE KNEW OF NO MAJOR PROBLEM IN OUR RELATIONS OTHER THAN THE STRAINS CAUSED BY OUR PARTIAL ARMS EMBARGO AND THE TERMINATION OF OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE. AFTER SHELTON INQUIRED ABOUT HER UNDERSTANDING THAT VILLAGRAN FELT PERSONALLY SLIGHTED (WITHOUT GIVING SOURCE OR DETAILS), ZELAYA EVIDENTLY CALLED VILLAGRAN, SINCE ON SAME AFTERNOON VILLAGRAN CALLED SHELTON TO SAY ANY COMMENT HE MAY HAVE MADE ALONG THAT LINE WAS INTENDED AS JOKE (HE ALSO MADE EMERGENCY REQUEST FOR TEAR GAS, WHICH WILL BE SUBJECT OF SEPTTEL).

3. IN LIGHT OF VILLAGRAN'S CALL AND OUR UNDERSTANDING OF HIS POLITICAL SITUATION AND MERCURIAL PERSONALITY, WE ARE NOT INCLINED TO BELIEVE HIS COMMENTS IN MEXICO ACCURATELY  
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REFLECTED THE GOG'S POSITION, AND THEY MAY NOT HAVE ACCURATELY REFLECTED HIS OWN POSITION. IF HE INTENDED THEM TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY (DESPITE HIS TELEPHONED ASSERTION), THEY ARE PERHAPS ATTRIBUTABLE EITHER TO PIQUE THAT WE HAVE NOT USED HIM AS OUR PRIME CHANNEL OF CONTACT WITH THE GOG OR TO A DELIBERATE EFFORT ON HIS PART TO RESCUE HIS APPARENTLY FALLING STOCK WITH THE LUCAS ADMINISTRATION BY PROVOKING FROM US A COMPENSATORY SHOW OF CLOSE RELATIONS WHICH HE CAN USE TO PROTECT HIS POSITION OR EVEN INCREASE HIS INFLUENCE WITHIN THAT ADMINISTRATION.

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## Message Attributes

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**Subject:** STATEMENTS OF GUATEMALAN VICE PRESIDENT DURING VISIT TO MEXICO  
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